

Message Text

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TAGS: SNAR, UK

SUBJECT: BRIEFING MATERIALS ON INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS
CONTROL

1. BELOW IS TEXT OF STATEMENT ON THE UK FROM THE 1977
EDITION OF THE UNCLASSIFIED BOOK ISSUED BY S/NM ENTITLED
"BRIEFING MATERIALS ON INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL".
EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO REVIEW TEXT AND REDRAFT OR
UPDATE AS NECESSARY FOR INCLUSION IN 1978 BRIEFING BOOK.
RESPONSE BY AUGUST 15 WOULD BE APPRECIATED IF POSSIBLE.

BEGIN TEXT.

ILLCIT DRUG PROBLEM

DRUG ABUSE IN BRITAIN IS NOT A MAJOR SOCIAL PROBLEM.
THERE IS ALSO NOT MUCH TRAFFICKING IN DRUGS. FURTHER-
MORE, DRUG USE AND TRAFFICKING IN BRITAIN IS NOT RELATED
TO ORGANIZED OR SERIOUS CRIME. MUCH OF THE TRAFFICKING
THAT DOES TAKE PLACE IS RESTRICTED TO AIRPORT TRANSITS.
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BRITAIN'S MAIN PROBLEMS OF DRUG ABUSE AND TRAFFICKING
CONTINUE TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH CANNABIS (MARIJUANA AND
HASHISH), SMUGGLED PRINCIPALLY FROM PAKISTAN,
AFGHANISTAN, LEBANON, AND MOROCCO. DUE BOTH TO SOME
INCREASE IN USAGE AND IMPROVED ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES,
ARRESTS FOR CANNABIS-RELATED OFFENSES HAVE INCREASED

IN RECENT YEARS. IN 1976, OVER 4500 KILOGRAMS OF CANNABIS WERE SEIZED BY CUSTOMS.

LOCAL DRUG ABUSE, THOUGH GROWING IN NEW DIRECTIONS, REMAINS MINOR COMPARED WITH THE PROBLEMS IN OTHER COUNTRIES. THE USE OF HASHISH AND CANNABIS HAS REMAINED RELATIVELY STABLE IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, WHILE THAT OF COCAINE, AMPHETAMINES AND BARBITURATES HAS GROWN CONSIDERABLY. HEROIN USAGE, WITH JUST UNDER 2000 REGISTERED USERS, REMAINS FAIRLY CONSTANT. THE GROWTH IN USE OF AMPHETAMINES AND BARBITURATES IS CAUSING THE GOVERNMENT CONCERN.

DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS

THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM OF THE US HAS ALREADY BEEN REACHED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. BRITISH GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS ARE COMMITTED TO AND GENERALLY CAPABLE OF MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER THE PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING AND TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS. THEY CONTINUE TO BE EFFECTIVE IN SUPPORTING OUR MORE IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE OF THE INTERDICTION AND DETERRENCE OF ILLICIT TRAFFIC AND PRODUCTION OF DRUGS DESTINED FOR THE US.

WHILE PENALTIES ARE SUBSTANTIAL UNDER UK DRUG UNCLASSIFIED

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LEGISLATION, THERE IS A STRONG EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION AND PREVENTION. EXISTING LEGISLATION (A COMPREHENSIVE NEW LAW WAS ENACTED IN 1971) RECOGNIZES THAT PERSONS AFFECTED BY THE MISUSE OF DRUGS MUST BE HELPED TO OBTAIN ADVICE, TREATMENT, AND REHABILITATION. THE BRITISH ARE CONTINUING TO ENLARGE THEIR TREATMENT PROGRAMS, THE GENERAL POLICY OF WHICH IS TO WEAN THE ADDICT AWAY FROM HEROIN AND DRUG INJECTION AND ON TO METHADONE TAKEN ORALLY.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT CONTINUES TO BE SHARED BY THE DRUG SQUAD OF NEW SCOTLAND YARD AND HM CUSTOMS AND EXCISE. TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION

ARE THE PROVINCE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY. THE HOME OFFICE HAS OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICY AND LEGAL ASPECTS, AND THE FCO FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. BEGINNING IN 1972, HMG MADE SUBSTANTIAL EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ITS ENFORCEMENT IN SPITE OF AN ALMOST OVERWHELMING MANPOWER SHORTAGE PROBLEM. HIGH INFLATION COMBINED WITH LOW REAL WAGES HAS LED TO A STEADY DECLINE IN TOTAL PERSONNEL IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

IN THE UK. THIS HAS HAD AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE ABILITY OF THE VARIOUS POLICE ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO COPE WITH THE GROWING DRUG CONTROL PROBLEM. NEVERTHELESS, CUSTOMS AGENTS ASSIGNED TO DRUG ENFORCEMENT HAVE GROWN IN THE LAST YEAR FROM 45 TO 85 AGENTS.

THE BRITISH COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH THE US AND UN DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS. THEY JOINED WITH THE US AND OTHERS AS CO-SPONSORS OF AMENDMENTS TO STRENGTHEN THE SINGLE CONVENTION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS; HOWEVER, HMG HAS NOT AS YET RATIFIED THE AMENDING PTOTOCOL. SINCE ENTERING THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ON JANUARY 1, 1973, THE UK GOVERNMENT HAS BECOME EQUALLY ACTIVE IN EC ACTIVITIES IN DRUG ABUSE CONTROL AND TREATMENT. BRITAIN HAS NOT UNCLASSIFIED

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YET SIGNED THE PROTOCOL ON PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES. HMG IN 1976 DECIDED TO REINSTITUTE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UN FUND FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL WHICH WERE SUSPENDED LAST YEAR BECAUSE OF THE RECLSSION AND REDUCED GOVERNMENT SPENDING ACROSS THE BOARD. THE CONTRIBUTION WAS 10,000 POUNDS.

US PROGRAMS

OUR PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE NARCOTICS ABUSE PROGRAMS WHICH CENTER ON THE DESIRABILITY OF INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF DRUG ABUSE CONTROL AND OFFICIAL AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR HIGHER PRIORITY FOR DRUG CONTROL; ON IMPROVING COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN THE US AND LOCAL ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS; AND ON OBTAINING SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES. THE PROGRAM STRATEGY ENVISAGES A BROAD RANGE OF INFORMATIONAL DIPLOMATIC AND COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES. TWO AMERICAN DEA REPRESENTATIVES AND TWO US CUSTOMS REPRESENTATIVES ARE ATTACHED TO OUR EMBASSY IN LONDON AND MAINTAIN CLOSE LIAISON WITH THEIR BRITISH COUNTERPARTS.

WE HAVE ACTIVELY LOBBIED HMG CONCERNING THEIR DECISION NOT TO CONTRIBUTE TO UNFDAC IN 1975-76, AND WE ARE IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE HOME OFFICE AND THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE ON THE QUESTION OF RATIFICATION OF THE PROTOCOL AMENDING THE SINGLE CONVENTION AND THE PSYCHOTROPIC CONVENTION. BOTH HAVE STATED THAT HMG IS COMMITTED TO RATIFICATION OF BOTH INSTRUMENTS. DELAYS HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY DEFINITIONAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE CONTROL OF AMPHETAMINES AND BARBITURATES. WE WILL CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE BRITISH PROGRESS TOWARD UNCLASSIFIED

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RATIFICATION.

THE SECOND DEA INTERNATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE TO BE
HELD IN BRITAIN TOOK PLACE IN MARCH, 1976.

THE UK COOPERATES FULLY IN EXTRADITION AND EXPULSION
OF DRUG TRAFFICKERS.

THE MISUSE OF DRUGS ACT IN 1971 IS THE BASIC DRUG
ENFORCEMENT LAW IN THE UK. IT IS CONSIDERED BY BRITISH
LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES AND US DEA AND CUSTOMS
OFFICIALS TO BE SATISFACTORILY STRICT. ITS ENFORCEMENT
IS CONSIDERED ACTIVE ENOUGH TO HAVE DETERRENT EFFECT
ON POTENTIAL DRUG TRAFFICKERS.

END TEXT.

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